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## The Meaning of the Word Iowa

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man's defence was conducted by David Rorer, who afterwards won high distinction as a lawyer and author. It was written long ago that "Slaves cannot breathe in England," and it would seem that the atmosphere of early Iowa was equally unfriendly to that "peculiar institution," as it was called in those days. A few were held for a time—as the United States census of 1840 sets forth—in Dubuque and Des Moines counties, but Iowa soil was never congenial to slavery and it soon disappeared.

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### THE MEANING OF THE WORD IOWA.

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This subject is still frequently taken up and discussed, with the result, however, that little or no additional light is ever thrown upon it. Exact information has been greatly desired in the past, as it is now, and doubtless will be in the future when "mould gathers upon the memories" of all who are alive today. From whatever information is available now, it would seem that the meaning of this particular word, or words sounding very much like it, varied with different tribes of Indians who formerly occupied the territory of this and surrounding states. This fact doubtless accounts for the confusion or contrariety of opinion which has existed in regard to its signification. Popularly, in this State, for many years past, it has been thought to signify "The Beautiful Land." Two agreeing statements in regard to its meaning would seem to be entitled to respectful consideration, if not to final acceptance. The first was contained in a letter still extant by Antoine Le Claire, the distinguished half-breed, who lived and died in Davenport, to Hon. Theodore S. Parvin. It was dated March 10, 1860. Mr. Le Claire was well educated, "an accomplished linguist, speaking some twelve or fourteen Indian dialects, as well as

French and English."\* Aside from this he was a most successful business man—honorably connected with the old State Bank of Iowa—one whose word and reliability were never questioned. He must have been well informed. And then, he could have had no possible motive for practicing a deception. He wrote: "Iowa means this: A tribe of Indians were in search of a home or hunting—in fact, wandering; and when they reached a point they admired and was all they wished—they said: 'Iowa—*This is the place*'" From this he stated that the meaning was derived. A friend of the writer a few months ago asked some of the aged Tama county (Musquakie) Indians the same question, and the reply was given in almost the identical words we have quoted from Le Claire. This evidence makes a very strong case so far as the Iowa Indians are concerned. It is apparent that it is a word expressive of great satisfaction with a locality, and hence may have arisen the belief that it signified "The Beautiful Land," which is altogether fanciful. The late Judge A. R. Fulton, in his "Red Men of Iowa," devotes two or three pages to the meaning of this word, and others sounding like it, as they were reported to have been used by various tribes of Indians of the Middle West, including that which we have quoted. The Indians have for the most part passed away and it is now well-nigh impossible to derive information from first hands. But the authoritative statements set forth above would seem to be conclusive.

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\* Franc B. Wilkie's "Davenport Past and Present," pp. 167-9.

THE whole number of men who enlisted in the war of the rebellion from the State of Iowa, was 78,059. Of these 2,017 were killed in battle, 1,199 died of wounds, and 8,695 died of disease. Of the officers 135 were killed, 88 died of wounds, and 115 of disease. There were reported as drowned, 2 officers and 109 men. Of the wounded there were 573 officers and 8,282 men. These figures are from the records of the Adjutant General's office.

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